

SOME
THOUGHTS
ON THE
BILL

Depending before the Right Honourable

THE
HOUSE OF LORDS,
FOR

Prohibiting the EXPORTATION of the
Woollen Manufactures of *Ireland* to
Foreign Parts,

Humbly offer'd to their Lordships.

DUBLIN,

Printed by *Joseph Ray* in *Skinner Row*, over against
the *Tholsel*, MDCXCVIII.

*REASONS against the Bill for Prohibiting
the Exportation of the Woollen Manufactures of
Ireland, to Foreign Parts.*

THE Bill for Prohibiting the Exportation of the Woollen Manufacture out of *Ireland* to Foreign Parts, being now under your Lordships Consideration, I have presumed to offer my Thoughts concerning it, and shall endeavour to shew it will be detrimental to the Interest of both *England* and *Ireland*. If this hath the end I design by it, I shall think my time well spent; If not, I hope the Sincerity of my Intentions will atone for my Inability of Performance.

I shall begin by shewing the great Advantages *England* reaps by the Trade of *Ireland*, that your Lordships may judge how little Reason there is to be jealous of them, and how tender this Nation ought to be of putting unnecessary Difficulties upon them.

'Tis a common Saying amongst us, that it would be well for *England* if *Ireland* was under the Sea; whereas I hope to make it appear, that *England* gets more by *Ireland* than by the Trade of the whole World besides; and if in the late Reigns *Ireland* had not in a great measure supplied the Losses we suffer'd by the French, Indian and Eastern Trades, we had been long since undone, and it had not been now the common Debate of the Town how to undo them.

This will appear to be evident, if we consider the Particulars relating to both Kingdoms.

Near a third part of all the Lands of that Kingdom, belonging to English Proprietors who inhabit here, and have their Rents constantly return'd in ready Money.

Beside this, most of the Nobility and Gentry of *Ireland* spend their Estates here; they live no longer in *Ireland* than to raise a sum of Money to spend here in their Pleasures. This is the Seat of Government: Here are the Court and the Societies of Law: Here all the Nobility and Gentry come for Employments, Education, or Pleasure; which Considerations alone would exhaust that Kingdom, if it had the Riches of both *Indies*.

I will add to this, that *England* supplies *Ireland* with most of the Commodities they consume; and notwithstanding all our frights, there are nine in ten of that Country, that are able to buy it, clothed in Woollen Manufactures sent from *England*, and in exchange we have very few Commodities from them; for their Cattle are prohibited, there are Impositions upon their Tallow, Leather, and Corn, which almost amount to a Prohibition; and last Year the Tonnage and Poundage was doubled upon their Linen and other Manufactures; and such Commodities as are suffer'd to come from thence are either absolutely necessary to us, or Materials for our Manufactures, as Wooll, Flax, Cony skins, raw Hides, Sheepskins, Rape-seed, &c.

In times of Peace there was near 100000 *l. per annum* return'd neat to the Court, besides the Charge of that Government; and since the War they have contributed to the Publick Charge as far as their late Misfortunes would suffer them, and without doubt in a new War will advance large Supplies of Men and Money, if we do not disable them.

Besides

Besides this, most of the Trade of that Kingdom is carried on by English Stocks, and in English Bottoms; and a great number of their Estates are mortgaged to English Men at the unreasonable Interest of ten *per cent*. They are but Factors, and most of the Profit redounds to us; they toil for our Advantage, they sow and we reap.

I have enumerated these Particulars, to shew, that whatsoever *Ireland* gets by Trade from the whole World centers in *England*, and is returned hither by Bills of Exchange from *Spain, Holland, France, the West Indies*, and other places. If they gain'd ten Millions a Year, it would come to *England*; and if they get but ten Thousand Pounds, we can have no more from them. They have no Mines of Silver and Gold, and therefore can send none to us but what they get first from others; and if we hinder them from making Advantages of other Nations, we can make none of them; so that what is lost in the Parish is got in the Hundred. Nor is it possible that *Ireland* should advance in Riches in any proportion to *England*, for the former Issues will draw away their Wealth as fast as ever they get it: and this is manifested by twenty Years Experience before the War; for though they got a great many Millions over-balance from the rest of the World, yet according to the best Computations they never had above three hundred thousand Pounds in that Kingdom.

The Particulars I have mentioned amount to above 600000 *l. per annum*, besides the great Advantages we receive by being supplied from thence with Materials for our Manufactures, as before-mentioned. If so, I submit to your Lordships, whether the Over-balance we have of the rest of the World amount to as much more: If it does, I am sure we shall quickly be a rich People; but

but if not, then how tenderly ought we to use a Nation that yields us so much Profit? There is a Mediocrity in Nature which we cannot exceed without destroying what we design to advance. Moderate Impositions raise large Sums, and great ones often raise nothing. We may shear our Sheep so close, as to flee them that they shall never bear Wooll again. I have heard of a Man that try'd to bring his Horse to live without Meat, and then he died. I wish this be not the case of *Ireland*, that we desire to get so much from them, till at last we put them out of a condition to pay us any thing.

But there is another Consideration which strikes deeper yet; Whether by Bills of this kind we shall not make the Possession of that Kingdom insecure to us, and after so much expence of Blood and Treasure at last throw it again into Irish hands.

My Lords I have heard but of two ways of keeping conquered Countries in Subjection, by Arms, or by Colonies

As to the first (besides the Charge of it, which commonly eats up the whole Profit) I think few will deny but it is equally dangerous to the conquering or the conquered Country: There can be no Force in the Province but may be brought to the Mother Kingdom; and if they are sufficient without other Assistance to keep one Country in entire Subjection, in time they will keep the other so too.

The other way is by Colonies, and this is the method that free Governments have always taken to secure their Conquests. This *Rome* did for four hundred years, till at last their Conquests were so large that their Government grew top-heavy, the Trunk was not large enough to support its Branches. This our Ancestors did to secure *Ireland*, and is the easiest, least chargeable, and least dangerous Method.

Now

Now the establishing Colonies, my Lords, is often done by establishing the conquering Army on some part of the conquered Lands, sometimes by sending forth a number of your People to inhabit there ; but always by giving them such Encouragements, that it shall be their Interest to keep the Natives in subjection.

This is the case of *Ireland*, that after five hundred years contending, 52 Rebellions and Massacres, to the loss of a Million of English, the conquering Army often planted in the Country, and multitudes besides leaving *England* to inhabit there, almost the whole Kingdom is at last got into the English hands ; and if we should lay such difficulties upon them, that they should think it their Interest to leave the Country, or not be very solicitous for the English Interest there, I submit to your Lordships great Wisdom, whether that Kingdom may not hereafter give us fresh trouble. *France* is but a new Friend, and *Scotland* for late reasons is not much in humour with us ; and we know the whole North of *Ireland* is inhabited by that Nation, and multitudes of them go over every day, and will do so notwithstanding this or any other Law that can be made.

I would not suggest such improbable and such wicked thoughts, as that the English of that Country should join with them in any Interest but in subserviency to *England* ; but I hope I may say without offence that the better any People are used, the better Subjects they will make : And I believe no one will deny, if they had thought it their Interest to have joined with the late King, we had had much more trouble in reducing the Country. The Town of *Londonderry*, the *Iniskillen-men*, and the *Militia* of *Ireland*, had their share, and a considerable one too, in bringing the Country to obedience.

No

No one knows what unhappy occasions may arise in ages to come of difference between our Kings and People and therefore we ought to be tender how we make it the Interest of a whole Kingdom to be subservient to the designs of a corrupt Court, who will offer them any advantages. Most of us have read, and some of us have seen with our Eyes, those times that Courts have plaid *England* against *Scotland*, *Scotland* against *England*, and *Ireland* against both; and we have heard of the time, that an Irish Parliament hath been called to give Money to reduce an English one.

They are not contending for Power or great Riches; they neither Trade to the *East-Indies*, *Turkey*, or *Africa*; they have neither *Hamborough*, *Hudsons-Bay*, *Greenland*, or *Russia* Companies; they have no Fleets or Plantations; they ask only the common benefits of Earth and Air. They desire only to change their native Commodities for those they want, and to manufacture a small part of their own Product, which is a liberty seems to be allowed them by the Law of Nature, and which I don't find hath been denied by the most severe Conquerors.

And here, my Lords, I would distinguish between Colonies for Trade, and Colonies for Empire. The first is when a small number of your people are sent forth to plant Commodities which your native Country does not produce, as in the *West-Indies*, or else when they are sent to negotiate a Trade with the Natives, and build Forts for their Security, as in *Africa* and the *East Indies*. In both these cases it hath been usual to restrain their whole Trade to their Mother Kingdom; for there can be no other reason for their establishment, and their number being small, they will have sufficient encouragement for all their Charge, Industry, and Hazard.

But

But Colonies for Empire stand upon quite different reasons ; they are always planted to keep great Countries in subjection, and prevent the charge and hazard of constant standing Armies. These have always received the utmost Encouragement, much less been restrained from making the best advantage of their natural Product, and having their whole Trade restrained to their Mother-Kingdom ; but with humble submission, the Case of *Ireland* is yet harder : for by this Act they will be restrained to carry their Woollen Manufactures to Foreign parts, and the Impositions formerly laid, are sufficient to hinder them from coming hither, so that they must carry them no where.

But my Lords, if we had destroyed the Woollen Manufacture in *Ireland*, is it necessary that all will be made in *England*, that is hindred from being made in *Ireland* ? That's a Tartar's Conceit, that if they kill any man, they shall immediately enjoy his Wisdom and Beauty ; but I am afraid this will not be the Case of *England* : for *Holland*, *Scotland*, *Venice*, *Germany*, and *France*, pretend to the Woollen Manufacture as well as they ; and *France* hath been always equal, if not superiour to us, in their skill of making Stuffs : and can it be conceived that they will not share, if not in a great measure engross the benefit we propose in the destruction of that Manufacture in *Ireland* ? If so, then how much more will it be to our advantage to receive the whole profit at second hand, than at best to divide it with other Nations, and chiefly with *France*, which hath always sent Stuffs to *Spain* and *Portugal*, as well as *England* ? and these are the only Nations I have heard of, which *Ireland* hath dealt with in that kind ; and tho' for a few years before the War, *Ireland* might increase in their Manufacture of Stuffs, yet it is very plain it was not upon the ruines of *England*, for those Manufactures both then, and during the War, have advanced prodigiously here, as will appear by the Entries in the Custom-house, as well as by

a greater consumption of them at home; and it seems a very hard case to hinder *Ireland* from enriching themselves, and in consequence this Kingdom, at the expence of other Nations:

But it seems we are particularly afraid of *Ireland*, because we are told they can under-work us, and send their Commodities to a Foreign Market cheaper than we; which fact with humble submission is otherwise. 'Tis true, common labour in Husbandry is much cheaper there then here, but such as requires skill and knowledg is not so: and this is true not only in *Ireland*, but in all Countries thin of people, for there cannot be brought together numbers enough to carry on any Manufacture with success; and if they could, Stocks and Materials are wanting to set them to work: besides, naturally men choose rather to live in idleness and sloth, than labour; and in poor Countries, where they can satisfy the ordinary occasions of life with little industry, they will hardly be perswaded to learn an Art, to which it will cost them seven years pains to attain; and those who give themselves that trouble, will be sure to be better paid than in a well peopled Country, where they must either work or starve. This is the reason that in the *West-Indies*, where the labour of a Black, is not worth above Six pence a day, yet an ordinary Artificer will earn a Crown, and sometimes ten Shillings. This is the reason that linnen Cloth doth not thrive so well in *Ireland* as in *Holland*, where common labour is three times as dear; and this is the reason that Woollen Cloth could never be made in *Ireland* so cheap as it is sent from *England*, notwithstanding Freight and great Customs paid there; which appears by their being never able to set up that Manufacture with success, most of the Gentry and Merchants of that Kingdom being cloth'd with English Cloth. They make only a few Stockings, Stuffs, and Frizes, which are different from those made in *England*, and the sale of them is more owing to the particular way of making them, than any advantage

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tage in the price ; and yet notwithstanding they send but very few abroad, it appearing by the Custom-house Books of *Ireland*, that the Woollen Manufacture imported into *Ireland* from *England*, is ten times the value of what is exported from *Ireland* to the rest of the World. But admitting they could work cheaper there, yet 'tis no consequence they can sell the Manufacture cheaper. There are several Foreign Materials necessary to it, which come cheaper to us than them : besides, the difference of Interest gives us a great advantage. No man will imploy his Time and Stock in any Manufacture without trebling the common Interest of his Money. This Consideration alone makes above fifteen *per cent.* difference : besides, men upon small Stocks, and in a poor Country, will expect to get much more in proportion, than upon great ones in a rich Country, because there are so many ways in the former, of turning their money to advantage. Great Stocks and low Interest carry away the Trade of the World ; and, as is observed by Sir *Josiah Child* in his Book of Trade, where Labour is dearest, there are most Manufactures, as in *Holland* and *England*, more than in any Countries in *Europe*, and in the West of *England* more than the North. Whether this is the Cause or Effect, is not material, since 'tis plain that Dearness of Wages does not destroy Manufactures, but always is an Evidence that they thrive, as we experience every day, that when the Woollen Manufacture is most demanded, Wages run highest.

But they tell us, that *Ireland* will drein away our People ; tho by the way they give but a scurvy Argument for it, when they say, they can earn less Wages there. Now, my Lords, I could be glad to know how many People have gone to *Ireland* that could live in *England* ? Few Men leave their Country, their Acquaintance and Relations, but for necessity, because they would not hang or starve at home ; Men who are in Debt, Unfortunate, or spent what they had ; and if they

had not *Ireland* to go to, would go to the Plantations, or else to *Holland* and other Countries, and be lost to the Kingdom for ever.

But what shall those men do, that are bred up to that *Manufacture* in *Ireland*, and understand nothing else? Men that have spent their whole Life-time in learning an Art, will not go to School again to learn a new one: They will rather leave their Country, and find another, where they may receive more Encouragement. They can't come to *England*, for the Laws of the Poor prohibit them to live in any Parish: *Holland* will receive the Protestants, and *France* the Papists; or perhaps they will go to some Country, and set up the *Manufacture* where 'tis not yet pretended to. All the Nations in the World would promote any Proposition of that kind, and with open Arms receive those who would give them any Assistance. 'Twas the Duke of *Alva's* driving out the Flemings that set up the Woollen *Manufacture* in *England*, and the Persecution in *France* hath very much improv'd it, and many of the French Protestants for want of Imployment in *England*, are gone to *Ireland*; and if we should drive them and other Protestants out there, they will go somewhere else, where they will be sure to be received: and the Consequence to the Publick is the same, whether People leave their Country for fear of Persecution, or because they can't live in it; but the Consequence will be much more fatal to *Ireland*, by driving out such a number of Protestants, to the lessening the English Interest there.

And after all, are we sure, my Lords, this Act will answer the ends designed by it? I would not suggest so unbecoming a Thought, as that the Magistrates in *Ireland* should not do their utmost to execute it, but that we find the Officers in other Countries are not over-zealous for the publick Interest when their own is concerned. Few Men are in any Employments in *Ireland*, but either have or hope to have an

an Interest in the Country: and what probability can there be of having a Law well executed, when the Nobility, the Gentry, and the whole Body of the People have an Interest against it? We have an Instance of this in the Coasts of *Kent* and *Sussex*: for though 'tis the Interest of the whole Kingdom besides to prohibit Wooll going to *France*, yet because 'tis the Interest of a few hundreds that it should, all the Laws made to the contrary have proved ineffectual; and in my humble Opinion it is worth your Lordships deepest Consideration, whether this Law may not put *Ireland* upon negotiating a secret Trade with *France*, than which nothing can be more fatal to *England*. But there is another Country that pretends to the Woollen Manufacture nearer than *France*. *Scotland* lies but three hours sail from *Ireland*, and the whole North of that Kingdom is inhabited by Scots, and if we should put such Hardships upon them, I am afraid it will not be an easy matter to hinder their trafficking with their Countrymen, which may be done in little Boats; and what is not work'd up in *Scotland*, may be sent from thence to *France*. The whole Kingdom of *Ireland* thinks it as much their Interest as ours to prohibit the carrying their Wooll to Foreign Parts: but if we should hinder them from sharing in the Benefit of that Law, 'tis to be feared they will send it where they can get most for it, notwithstanding this or any Laws that can be made to prevent it. Besides, there is another thing worthy of Consideration, whether if we should hinder the People of *Ireland* from sending any of their Woollen Manufactures abroad, they will not agree together to spend none but their own at home, which if they do, this Act will recoil upon *England* with a witness. The Bill prohibiting their importing Irish Cattel hath put them upon Navigation; and an extenstive Trade with other Nations; and 'tis to be feared, if we should hinder them from selling their Manufactures to other Nations, they will have Wit enough to spend none but their own in *Ireland*.

But

But if, my Lords, notwithstanding all that may be said, it shall be thought the Interest of *England* to destroy the Woollen Manufacture in *Ireland*, there is an easier and Gentler way of doing it. The Power of the Government is very great in that Country, and may give it secret Discouragements, and let it decline by degrees: they may divert it by setting up the Linnen Manufacture in the places where the Woollen most prospers. Perhaps the Parliament of *Ireland*, now they see the Pleasure of *England*, will do their Endeavours to divert their Stock and People to the Linnen Manufacture; but with the utmost *Submission* I say it, that it seems too severe to tell them and the whole World in so solemn a manner, that they shall not Manufacture any of their own Product; it bears a Sting in the Tail of it, and teaches them this hard Lesson, that whenever hereafter they with great Charge, Hazard, and perhaps forty Years Industry arrive to a degree of Perfection in any thing, if it appears to be the real or mistaken Interest of *England* to suppress it, all their hopes and Endeavours must be dashed to pieces in a moment, their Cattle are already prohibited, their Corn, their Leather, their Tallow, are so in a great measure, they cannot come from the *West-Indies* but must touch in *England*: But this Bill goes farther yet; it says, in effect, they shall not bring their Manufactures here, nor carry them any where else: why may they not expect that another Parliament will say, that the carrying abroad their Beef will lessen the Price of our Beef, the carrying abroad their Corn will lessen the Price of our Corn, and so the rest of their Commodities; and with so much the greater probability, as they have the Precedent of this Act to justify the Reasonableness of it; Nay, my Lords, 'tis the common Subject of the Pamphlets, and Discourse of the Town, that it ought to be done already, and what Assurance shall they have that the Linnen Manufacture (which they are so often complimented with) will never

ver be set up in *England*? It hath been often attempted, and the want of Success in my poor Opinion hath been more owing to the Stock-jobbing and ill Conduct of the Managers, than any reason from the nature of the thing: yet notwithstanding a great deal of Linnen is made in *Lancashire, Westmoreland* and other Parts of the North of *England*, who begin already to grumble at the bringing in Flax and Linnen from *Ireland*. And if those Countries should improve in that Manufacture, I know no reason why it should not be as much Justice to prohibit the Linnen Manufacture in *Ireland* as now the Woollen, and no doubt the Parliament will not want Petitions to that purpose; they trade in no Commodities that *England* does not produce, and if they must not trade in those, they must trade in none; and then the English at best will quit the Country, and it must be maintained by vast Armies supported by the Men and Money of *England*; and even that is an uncertain Security, when all the Natives are their Enemies, and neighbouring Nations ready to assist them. But what seems hardest yet is, that the People of *England* should do that, how almost the whole Kingdom is in English and Protestants hands, which was never thought fit to be done whilst in Irish and Popish.

I have often lamented that some method hath not been found out to make *England* and *Ireland* joyn hand in hand in the same Interest, that *England* may not look upon *Ireland* as Rivals of their Trade, nor *Ireland* upon *England* as severe Masters, who would sacrifice them upon every imaginary and perhaps mistaken advantage. I doubt not but Expedients of this kind may be offered, but 'tis not now my Province, 'tis a Subject worthy of the Legislative Power, and your Lordships great Wisdom; but I humbly conceive Acts to ruine their Trade will work a quite contrary effect, and make *Ireland* look upon *England* instead of their Protectors, as the check to all their endeavours, and the obstacle to all their hopes.

hopes. I know your Lordships are not to be diverted from your purposes by distant Surmises; but 'tis no dishonour to apprehend just consequences; for to fear nothing is as great an extravagance, as to fear every thing.

It's your Lordships noble Province in this Government under Heaven, to redress Grievances, to relieve the Oppressed, and not only to correct the Exorbitances of Inferiour Courts, but to moderate the Excesses (if any should happen) of the other parts of the Government; and 'tis to your generous compassion that is offered the condition of an unhappy Nation, who in the cause, and for the sake of *England* have lost their Fathers, their Children, their Brothers, their Relations; who have seen their Country every where on a light fire, their Cities and Towns laid in rubbish and ashes, their Estates ravished from them, their Faith tortured, and their own blood spilt promiscuously in the Fields and Lanes, in the High-ways and Streets. Few have escaped this general destruction; and 'tis hoped you will not let those few be in the condition of poor ~~the~~ *the* ~~men~~ *men* on some Coasts, who when they are thrown half dead a shore, meet their ruine from those of whom they did expect relief. They are Englishmen sent over to conquer *Ireland*, your Countrymen, your Brothers, your Sons, your Relations your Acquaintance; governed by the same King, the same Laws; of the same Religion, and in the same Interest, and equally engaged in the same common cause of Liberty. And they hope this Nation that hath so lately escaped the fetters of Tyranny, will shew themselves easy and Gentle Masters to them; they hope you will not let them by their service to *England*, their zeal to their Religion, their love to their Liberty, and by the loss of their Stock, and benefit of their Estates for a great many years, purchase the loss of them for ever.

FINIS.

